

Spotlight

Express
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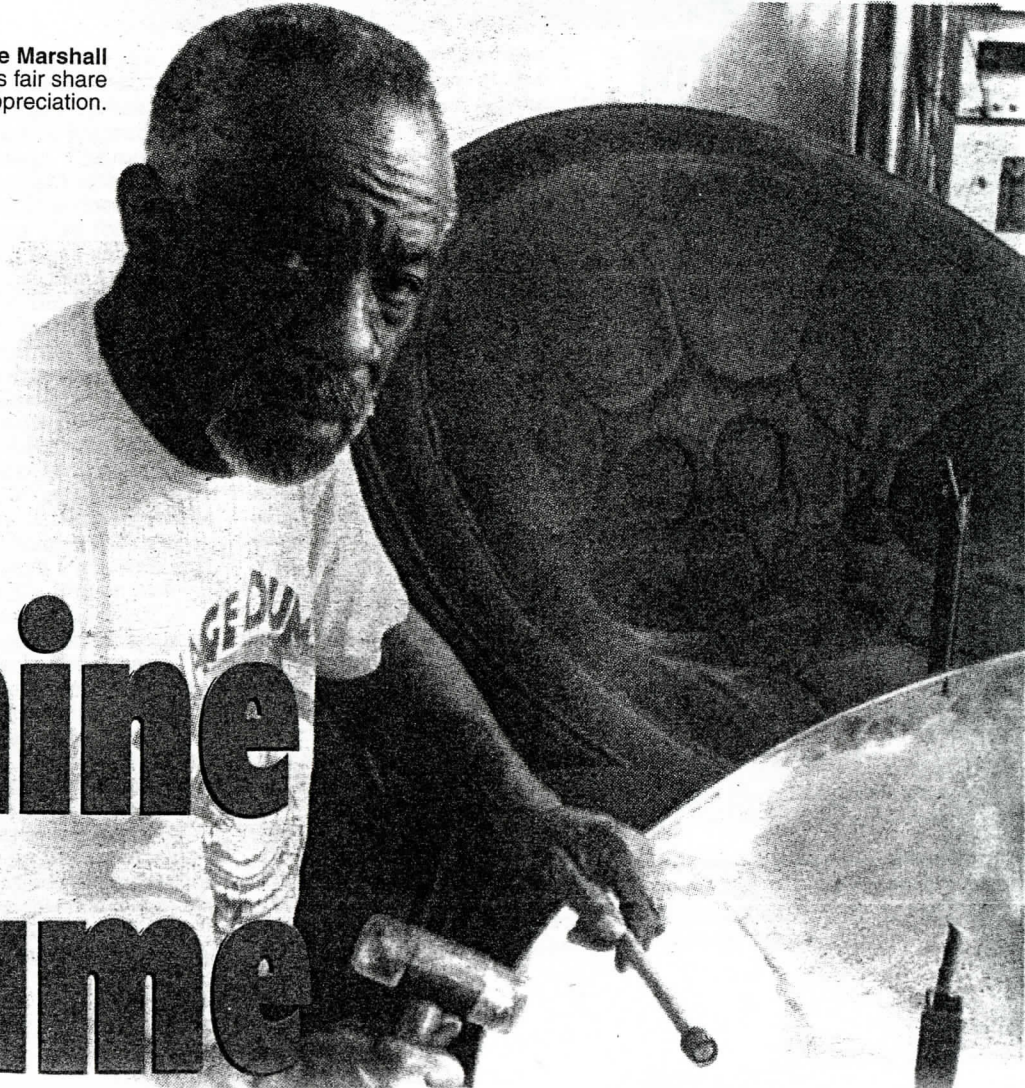
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LORD NELSON

PAN legend Bertie Marshall
finally receives his fair share
of appreciation.

Bertie Marshall for Sunshine Hall of Fame



TOR SUNSHINE Hall of Fame

...Rudder is People's Choice

By TERRY JOSEPH

FOR a man who has been responsible for a series of improvements to the sound and presentation of pan music over the past three decades, Bertie Marshall has never quite received his fair share of appreciation. Gil Figaro, founder of the Sunshine Awards, says his organisation is seeking to correct this cultural oversight.

Tomorrow night, Marshall and fellow pan pioneer Cecil "Cartarrh-Nose" Augustine, along with veteran calypsonians Bomber and Blakie, will be inducted into the Sunshine Awards Calypso and Steelband Hall of Fame.

The tributes will form part of a gala awards function, jointly hosted by Figaro and Miss World 1986 Giselle La Ronde-West, at the Tribeca Performing Arts Center, at Manhattan Community College, New York.

Pan tuner, arranger and innovator, Marshall, 62, has been involved with the instrument since his pre-teen years. In the latter day, his fame is associated with his work as tuner for the Witco Desperadoes Steel Orchestra, but since the Sixties, Marshall has been on the cutting-edge of the steelband move-

ment.

Unfortunately, much of his work in the early years was misunderstood. His major invention, The Bertphone, a frontline pan that (through amplification) afforded its player the facility of controlling the volume and duration of each note, was stoned off the streets on Carnival Day in 1967; on the premise that it produced "chinee" music. The refurbished (and improved) version was subsequently destroyed in a fire that spread from the home of a neighbour. It was never replaced.

But Marshall's inventiveness was not limited to experiments with electronic aids. In the acoustic range, he invented the double tenors and collaborated with the late Rudolph Charles, to develop the quadrophonic pan, and nine and 12-bass sets. He introduced the first canopies, as Carnival day protection from the sun, whose heat would often shift the values of notes.

His tuning set the standard for notes that rang out, moving away from the corks sound that hitherto prevailed, by correcting harmonics through tuning-technique. As musical arranger of the legendary Forsyth Hylanders, his work ("Let Every Valley Be Exalted"/ "Gypsy

Rondo") remains among the best-loved pan pieces ever.

Speaking to the *Express*, even as he fine-tuned an instrument for Ken "Professor" Philmore to take to Toronto that afternoon, Marshall said: "It is good to be considered. I am glad for that. I really feel good, but I cannot leave the work at this time to go to New York for the presentation. I am just too busy."

Marshall will not be the only celebrant missing when the lights go up tomorrow night. Guest performers Black Stalin and David Rudder will also miss the gala. Rudder (who is sharing the People's Choice honour with The Phantoms of Haiti) is due to return home tonight after performing at Miami Carnival and on contract in California and Stalin is booked to perform at the Mighty Sparrow's concert in Guaracara Park. This year, Sparrow is the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Nor will master designer Peter Minshall come face-to-face with the presenters to receive his Friend of the Arts award.

Tomorrow's black-tie event begins at 6 p.m. with a private cocktail reception, during which guests will be entertained by live steelband music. The awards presentation begins at 8 p.m. An

impressive cast of Caribbean artistes will perform at the show, which is titled *Splendours of the Caribbean*.

Under the musical direction of Joe R Brown, the cast includes calypsonians Gypsy, The Mystic Prowler, Chalkdust and Blakie, Rita Marley, Elsworth James, Terry Gajraj, Denyse Plummer, The Layne Twins, Arddin Herbert and Marie Brooks's Pan Caribbean Dancers.

Artistes from across the Caribbean will be vying for awards in 17 categories, for music that was commercially available between September 1 1996 and August 31 1997. Nominees for the Hall of Fame were developed through recommendations from various organisations, community groups, consultation with calypsonians, record producers and research undertaken by Director of Culture Dr Hollis ("Chalkdust") Liverpool, co-founder of the Hall of Fame.

Special Recognition awards are being presented to Rita Marley, Carlene Davis, Dennis De Souza and the United Nations Singers, who will do the recently completed fund-raising song "Calypso for Montserrat".

Express writer, Kim Johnson

The Sunshine Award Categories

Best New Male Artist
Female Vocalist of the Year
Male Vocalist of the Year
Best Political Commentary
Best Social Commentary
Best Creative Humour
Best Chutney-Soca Recording
Arranger of the Year
Producer of the Year
Best Recording by a Steelband
Best Recording by a Group of Dance Band
Best Recording for Children
Best Soca Parang
Best Rapso Recording
Calypso of the Year
Best Party Calypso

will receive the first-ever Journalism Award for his Pan Pioneer series.

